

Member, or a member of the media, peddle in propaganda.

Conservatives should shake off the role of useful idiots and present Putin, this war, and all demagogic leaders as what they truly are.

Vladimir Putin has poisoned journalists and jailed his opposition. He has bombed hospitals and schools. He has slaughtered innocents in Syria. Today, he is murdering civilians in Ukraine.

If this has not been enough for these useful idiots and their ilk, I urge them to find the red line Putin would have to cross.

To the puppets that are on our screens, our social media, and in the Halls of Congress perpetrating his lies, I say: Enough. You are helping Putin in this war. You are helping him strip Ukrainians of their freedom. You are helping our own country slide further from democracy.

Lincoln reminded us that we cannot escape history, that we will be remembered in spite of ourselves. In the end, history will remember those who stood up for the truth and the cowards who did not.

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#### RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, it is undeniable that religious freedom is America's keystone. This great country was founded by men and women who fled religious persecution and sought to govern themselves according to their religious beliefs.

Despite religious freedom having been woven into our constitutional system for well over two centuries, and the precedents it has established, Democrats are choosing to play judge, jury, and executioner in its trial.

Today, religious organizations are under attack by the woke agenda of Democrats. Those on the left claim that faith-based organizations must abandon their conscience and amend their employment practices, or they should not have access to Federal contracts or funds.

It is a damning ultimatum. Imagine how many faith-based organizations would be forced to close their doors because of this.

Madam Speaker, this coordinated campaign is being carried out by the left, and it is guided by the assumption that a radical, progressive dogma is more legitimate than religious beliefs. That assumption is pure insanity.

In this country, faith is not subjugated or left at the door. It is carried with us no matter where we may go.

I applaud every man and woman who is standing up to this egregious assault from the left and is fighting for the right to live by religious convictions at work and in business.

President Biden's so-called Build Back Better framework is riddled with

discriminatory provisions. One clause would have required faith-based childcare providers to abandon their faith during program hours if they wanted to participate in the Federal program.

And in the Community Services Block Grant program, the Democrats want to strip a provision that protects faith-based providers' right to remain strong in their faith as they serve individuals in need.

This protection has been in place without controversy or harm to any individual seeking assistance for decades. Why change it now? I think we know.

This isn't just religious persecution; it is textbook coercion. Unfortunately, there is more.

Democrats have also sought to remove protections for religious non-profit organizations and Federal contractors. Like their secular counterparts, faith-based charities in the United States simply want to serve the less fortunate, but discriminatory legislation could keep them from being able to do that.

Faith-based charities and religious Federal contractors alike deserve the chance to practice their religion freely without government interference.

It appears Democrats need a refresher on the First Amendment.

The government does not bestow the freedom of religion upon us; it is a freedom we have possessed since birth.

Whenever we see protections for religious freedom being chipped away in this country, it is our solemn duty as Americans and people of faith to take a stand.

#### BUILDING A BETTER AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. GARCIA) for 5 minutes.

Ms. GARCIA of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the impact the COMPETES Act will have on our Nation.

We are seeing the best economy for American workers in decades, with people earning higher wages, better benefits, and better jobs, thanks to President Biden's leadership.

With that said, when I visited with the leadership from the Port of Houston in my district a while back, they expressed their gratitude for Congress' strong investment in the maritime infrastructure needed to keep America's economy moving in the right direction.

They also expressed concern, however, that more workers will need technical training than our current system will be able to provide.

The America COMPETES Act will be that critical next step in providing vital maritime workforce training.

My home district, Texas-29, will benefit greatly from the large grant program for domestic maritime worker training and education included in the America COMPETES Act.

I was proud to see this maritime grant program language included, as it

was originally part of my bill, H.R. 987, which was one that was introduced to strengthen our maritime workforce.

This investment will provide more Houston area workers the technical training, education, and resources needed to become qualified for good-paying maritime jobs.

For example, the San Jacinto College Maritime Center in my district helps thousands of students learn new skills so they can earn good paychecks, paychecks that hold families together.

Located just outside of Houston, the San Jacinto College Maritime Program offers maritime training and deck-level coursework for all professional mariners. They cover everything from entry-level deckhands on an inland towboat to unlimited tonnage masters on the world's largest ships.

The COMPETES Act will empower the maritime grant program that will directly benefit this community college; more workers for maritime work.

But like the San Jacinto Community College in my district, there are also similar training centers across the Nation that will benefit. The COMPETES Act will help thousands of students learn new skills so they can provide comfortably for their families and live a good life with good benefits.

This is another way the America COMPETES Act will strengthen our supply chains. While there will be plenty of large-scale improvements across the Nation, there will also be many local governments like this in our hometowns that will benefit.

I look forward to President Biden signing this bill into law. And this is yet, Madam Speaker, another example of how we are building a better America for generations to come.

#### RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT SPENDING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. KELLER. Madam Speaker, this morning, I wish to address the American people and thank them for their hard work and their outstanding effort that funds our government and our Active Duty military personnel and veterans who have kept us safe, our law enforcement, our first responders, and all those who go to work every day making sure we are safe in our communities, safe in our Nation, and safe around the world.

I also want to thank all the people that go to work every day to earn a living and support their families. And, yes, those are the people, all of them, that provide the revenue by which America can operate, something I think President Biden has forgotten.

He has been in Washington, D.C., for half a century, and he proposed a budget earlier this week that spends \$73 trillion over the next 10 years and increases our national debt by 50 percent by the year 2032. Under that budget, the debt will be \$45 trillion.